Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Assessment of Competence for Lead HCA working in Fracture Clinic

Clinical Skill: Removal of Metal Clips, Staples & Sutures

Name:		Ward/Dept:	

Aim:	To safely and competently remove sutures, clips and staples
Objectives:	The practitioner will be able to: ▪ demonstrate understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to remove sutures/clips using an aseptic technique ▪ demonstrate competency in performing the procedure.
Training:	Attendance at a training session, observed practice followed by supervised practice within the fracture clinic.
Assessment:	Using performance criteria below.
Risk Assessment:	**MODERATE** (level of risk of harm to patient due to user error). **Assessment of competence will be by equipment trainer.**
Update:	Competence to be reviewed annually at appraisal/Individual Performance Development Review (IPDR).

UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE

It is expected that the Lead Healthcare Assistant will read the Gloucestershire NHS Foundation Trust Wound Care Guidelines and Chapter 48 of the Royal Marsden Manual (7th Edition) and be able to:

- Explain the principles of asepsis – holds an aseptic competency
- Safely and competently remove sutures, clips or staples
- Describe clinical signs of infection and discuss what action should be taken if the wound is infected.

I certify that the above named Lead Healthcare Assistant has completed the theoretical assessment which covered the above.

Signed:		Date:	
Print Name:		Position:	

CLINICAL SKILL	
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA - The practitioner will:	**Performed Safely (✓)**
1. Explain and discuss the procedure with the patient.	
2. Perform procedure using aseptic technique.	
3. Clean the wound with sterile solution 0.9% sodium chloride.	
For Removal of Sutures	
4. Lift knot of suture with forceps. Snip stitch close to the skin. Pull suture out gently.	
5. Use tip of scissors slightly open or stitch cutter to gently press the skin when the suture is being drawn out.	
For Removal of Clips	
6. Squeeze wings of clips together with forceps to release from the skin.	
7. If the wound gapes use adhesive sutures to oppose the wound edges.	
8. When necessary cover the wound with an appropriate dressing.	
For Removal of Staples	
9. Slide the lower bar of the staple remover with the v-shaped groove under the staple at an angle of 90°. Squeeze the handles of the staple remover together to open the staple. If the suture line is under tension, use the free hand to gently squeeze the skin either side of the suture line.	
10. If the wound gapes use adhesive sutures to oppose the wound edges.	

For All Suture Lines	
11. Record condition of suture line and surrounding skin (amount of exudate, pus, inflammation, pain, etc). Ask Registered Nurse or Medical Team to review wound before covering.	

I confirm that the Lead Healthcare Assistant named overleaf has completed the assessment competently.

Signed:		Date:	
Print Name:		Position:	

ASSESSOR COMMENTS

CANDIDATE COMMENTS

DECLARATION

I confirm that I have had theoretical and practical instruction on how to safely and competently perform removal of metal clips, staples and sutures, and agree to comply with the policy and procedures of the Trust. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to maintain and update my knowledge and skills relating to this competency.

Signed:		Date:	

SPONSOR/PEER REVIEW

To ensure the content is accurate, current and evidenced based, competencies are required to be peer reviewed by subject matter experts within the speciality. It is your responsibility, as the author, to ensure this is undertaken and the peer review section is signed by the appropriate person.

Author's Name:	Julie Bryan	Position:	Tissue Viability Nurse
Peer Review Name:		Position:	
Signed:		Date:	

REFERENCES

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust Wound Care Guidelines and Pressure Ulcer Prevention Policy, 2010;
The Royal Marsden Manual (7th Edition), Chapter 48; Gloucestershire NHSFT Waste Management Policy;
Essence of Care Standard 4 – Privacy & Dignity

WILL PROVIDE EVIDENCE FOR KSF

CORE DIMENSION 1: COMMUNICATION
CORE DIMENSION 3: HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY
CORE DIMENSION 5: QUALITY

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